

these public housing authorities. This mandate is especially burdensome on our PHAs, our small ones, because they have few staff resources to devote to the annual plans. While HUD has taken regulatory steps to reduce the reporting burden for small PHAs, the plans still require much unnecessary paperwork and additional time.

Reducing the unnecessary paperwork and reporting will help smaller PHAs better serve their communities and focus on their mission of providing affordable rural housing to rural residents in need.

H.R. 3422 only addresses annual plans. Small PHAs will still complete their HUD 5-year plan.

This legislation also requires PHAs to continue providing their residents with opportunity to help set goals and policies for the housing authority and to continue to certify their civil rights compliance with HUD.

However, I would note that the intent of this legislation is for HUD to keep the annual certification process as simple as possible and not create additional requirements and additional reports for PHAs.

This is a small bill, but it has a positive impact on PHAs in rural areas in my district, and I ask the House that this much-needed, commonsense regulatory relief for small public housing authorities be passed.

As the ranking member said, one of the things that makes sense is when government oversteps its bounds, it is appropriate for government to step back in and correct those. I think this is a much-needed correction so that we can let these small public housing authorities focus on the tenants and not on the paperwork.

I thank, again, the chairman and the ranking member.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself some additional time to simply say, I appreciate what the gentleman from Texas said in closing which is to focus on the tenants.

I think it is important that we continue to pay attention to housing authorities. Too often, people slip into the mistake of equating homeownership with homes. Homeownership is very important, yes, to the sense that people are economically and other ways able to own homes, that is a good thing. But a large number of low-income people, through a variety of reasons, economic and others, are not going to own homes, and we ought to be clear that it is the right of people to a home that we want to work for or at least the ability of people to have a decent home.

In many cases, that will be homeownership. But in some cases, it will not be, and we want to make it very clear, as far as the public sector is concerned, we ought to have the same obligation to help people make the most out of their home, whether they are tenants or owners. This is an example of how we do that.

So I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I just want to, again, congratulate the gentleman from Texas for his leadership and the cooperation on the other side.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3422, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3422.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

BROWNFIELDS REDEVELOPMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 280) to facilitate the provision of assistance by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for the cleanup and economic redevelopment of brownfields, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 280

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Brownfields Redevelopment Enhancement Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that—

(1) returning the Nation's brownfield sites to productive economic use could generate more than 550,000 additional jobs and up to \$2,400,000,000 in new tax revenues for cities and towns;

(2) redevelopment of brownfield sites and reuse of infrastructure at such sites will protect natural resources and open spaces;

(3) lack of funding for redevelopment is a primary obstacle impeding the reuse of brownfield sites;

(4) the Department of Housing and Urban Development is the agency of the Federal Government that is principally responsible for supporting community development and encouraging productive land use in urban areas of the United States;

(5) grants under the Brownfields Economic Development Initiative of the Department of

Housing and Urban Development provide local governments with a flexible source of funding to pursue brownfields redevelopment through land acquisition, site preparation, economic development, and other activities;

(6) to be eligible for such grant funds, a community must be willing to pledge community development block grant funds as partial collateral for a loan guarantee under section 108 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, and this requirement is a barrier to many local communities that are unable or unwilling to pledge such block grant funds as collateral; and

(7) by de-linking grants for brownfields development from section 108 community development loan guarantees and the related pledge of community development block grant funds, more communities will have access to funding for redevelopment of brownfield sites.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to provide cities and towns with more flexibility for brownfields development, increased accessibility to brownfields redevelopment funds, and greater capacity to coordinate and collaborate with other government agencies—

(1) by providing additional incentives to invest in the development and redevelopment of brownfield sites; and

(2) by de-linking grants for brownfields development from community development loan guarantees and the related pledge of community development block grant funds.

SEC. 3. BROWNFIELDS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE.

Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"SEC. 123. BROWNFIELDS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make grants under this section, on a competitive basis as specified in section 102 of the Department of Housing and Urban Development Reform Act of 1989 (42 U.S.C. 3545), only to eligible public entities (as such term is defined in section 108(o) of this title) and Indian tribes for carrying out projects and activities to assist the development and redevelopment of brownfield sites, which shall include mine-scarred lands.

"(b) USE OF GRANT AMOUNTS.—Amounts from grants under this section—

"(1) shall be used, as provided in subsection (a) of this section, only for activities specified in section 108(a);

"(2) shall be subject to the same requirements that, under section 101(c) and paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 104(b), apply to grants under section 106; and

"(3) shall not be provided or used in a manner that reduces the financial responsibility of any nongovernmental party that is responsible or potentially responsible for contamination on any real property and the provision of assistance pursuant to this section shall not in any way relieve any party of liability with respect to such contamination, including liability for removal and remediation costs.

"(c) AVAILABILITY OF ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall not require, for eligibility for a grant under this section, that such grant amounts be used only in connection or conjunction with projects and activities assisted with a loan guaranteed under section 108.

"(d) APPLICATIONS.—Applications for assistance under this section shall be in the form and in accordance with procedures as shall be established by the Secretary.

"(e) SELECTION CRITERIA AND LEVERAGING.—The Secretary shall establish criteria for awarding grants under this section, which may include the extent to which